



भारत का राजदूत  
वाशिंगटन, डी. सी.

**AMBASSADOR OF INDIA**

2107 Massachusetts Ave., N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20008

**December 10, 2019**

Honorable Elliot Engel  
Chairman  
House Committee on Foreign Affairs  
22066 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC. 20515

Honorable Michael McCaul  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Foreign Affairs  
22066 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Engel and Ranking Member McCaul:

I write to you in the spirit of friendship and trust, as strategic partners, representing the world's oldest and largest democracies, to share our concerns with respect to two resolutions introduced recently with regard to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), H. Res. 724 and H. Res. 745.

2. J & K has been an integral part of India since 1947. The anachronistic, temporary provision that governed J & K had created a cosy arrangement of local ownerships that served the state's political elite well but denied good governance, economic opportunities and social justice to the people. The resulting separatist sentiments in some quarters were then exploited by neighboring Pakistan to conduct cross-border terrorism.

3. In order to correct this anomaly and deliver to the people of J&K good governance, economic opportunities and socio-economic justice for the disadvantaged sections, on 5 August 2019, the Indian Parliament passed legislation by a two-thirds majority to abrogate Article 370. Certain precautionary measures that were put in place to ensure security have since been eased and the situation has returned to normalcy – there are no restrictions on movement and telephone and cellular communications, people are back at their work, markets are open, schools are functioning normally, hospitals have adequate medicines and Block Development Council elections have been held. It must be noted that the challenging security environment faced by India in the region has necessitated a gradual approach. The local authorities are regularly assessing the ground situation with a view to ensuring security and safe conditions for the common people to go about their daily lives. A detailed note on the latest situation on the ground is enclosed for your reference.

4. I have had the occasion of extensively briefing several members of the HFAC on this matter. My colleagues and I have also reached out to other members of Congress, including the HFAC, to keep them updated on the developments. The HFAC Sub-Committee on Asia, the Pacific & Non-proliferation and the Tom Lantos Commission have already held hearings on the matter in October and November 2019, respectively. We have duly noted the views expressed by the Members and will continue to be engaged with Members on this and other issues of interest.
5. As you are aware, the External Affairs and Defence Ministers of India will be visiting Washington for the upcoming 2+2 Dialogue on 18 December. The External Affairs Minister is scheduled to meet HFAC leadership at 1530 hours on 18 December. I hope other Members of the HFAC would also be able to join this meeting.
6. I urge the US House of Representatives to recognize that our efforts are towards creating a new development paradigm for the people of Jammu & Kashmir, that have tragically been and continue to be, victims of the agenda of Islamic radicalization and terrorism spawned from across the border for over three decades. I firmly believe that mutual respect for each others' institutions, such as the independent judiciary and the democratic processes that express the will of the people, would be undermined by Resolutions such as H:745 and H:724.
7. Thank you for your public service and your support for strengthening ties between India and the United States. I look forward to engaging with you on this important matter.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,  
  
(Harsh Vardhan Shringla)

**Congressman Eliot Engel**  
**Chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee**  
U.S. House of Representatives  
2426 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

**Congressman Michael McCaul**  
**Ranking Member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee**  
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2001 Rayburn House Office Building  
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**Copy to all Members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.**



### **LATEST SITUATION ON THE GROUND IN JAMMU & KASHMIR**

- **Essential supplies.** Including 24x7 electricity, water supply, healthcare and sanitation are being ensured. Damages to electricity lines due to very heavy snowfall in November 2019 were immediately rectified and electricity supply restored.
- **Enough stock of all essential items, food items and baby foods** are available in Jammu & Kashmir and is routinely replenished. There is no shortage of cooking gas. Stocks for 3 weeks are made available. As in the past, more than 200 winter stock centres have been established and stocked with essential items.
- **Hospitals and medical facilities are functioning normally.** There is no shortage of medicines. Wholesale and retail pharmacies are open and fully stocked. 6 weeks reserve of all medicines available in all Government hospitals. No case of overpricing of medicines.
- **All health care facilities** are operating and health care professionals are on duty. 1437 hospitals and health centres are fully functional in Jammu. In Kashmir, 10 district hospitals, 33 sub-district hospitals, 222 primary health centres, 604 health sub-centres and 158 new type Primary Health Centres are open and providing health service to the population. To further enhance healthcare, recruitment of 800 additional doctors has been approved.
- Government Medical College (GMC) in Kathua was inaugurated on 14.09.2019. On the same day, construction work began for an additional 200-bed hospital for GMC Kathua. Government has announced a new medical college in Leh. Government announced (on 1 December 2019) establishing a new Government Medical College in Handwara in Kashmir. Administration in Budgam released USD 15,000 on 25.09.2019 for improvement of health infrastructure at district hospital Budgam. Government has also conveyed that All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Jammu and AIIMS Kashmir would be completed by 2023 and 2025 respectively.
- **No movement restriction** in Jammu & Kashmir. **Air service** to Srinagar and Jammu **operational**. Rail service is also operational throughout Jammu & Kashmir. **Vehicular movement** in Jammu & Kashmir is **normal**. Private taxis, public transport are plying normally. Public transport including buses, mini-buses are functional on all routes. **Government offices and courts are fully functional**. Since 5 August, over

36,000 cases have been filed and over 52,000 cases disposed off by the courts.

- Under UDAN 4.0 (UdeDeshKaAamNagrik), a regional airport development and air connectivity scheme, Government has put up for bidding 11 unserved airports in Jammu & Kashmir and 2 underserved airports in Ladakh. The 11 Airports in J&K are Akhnur, Chamb, Chushal, Fukche, Gurex, Jhangar, Miran Sahib, Panzgam, Poonch, Rajouri, and Udhampur, while the two aerodromes in Ladakh are Kargil and Thoise.
- After a review of the situation on 07.10.2019, Home Department's advisory against tourists visiting Jammu & Kashmir has been lifted. **34,10,219 tourists, including 12,934 foreign tourists** visited Jammu and Kashmir in the last 6 months.
- All schools in Kashmir (around 8000) and in Jammu (more than 15,000 schools) are open and functioning normally. Colleges are also open. Medical and Dental colleges are functioning smoothly and students are appearing in examinations without any inconvenience. During ongoing examinations, 99.7% students attended schools.
- A meeting to identify land for **16 new Degree Colleges** in Kashmir was held on 25.09.2019. In addition, four professional colleges and one Administrative College were approved. Construction of new medical college in Anantnag is progressing well. District Administration of Srinagar announced on 20.09.2019 **modernization of 25 government schools**.
- **All landline telephones have been restored and are fully functional. Mobile connectivity has been restored in all districts.** Broadband internet services on landline phones have been fully restored in Jammu. 280 Internet kiosks (e-terminals for internet) have been established in all 10 districts in Kashmir. In addition, 64 special internet counters have been established in prominent hotels in Kashmir to cater to the needs of tourists.
- **No restriction on media/journalists** in Jammu & Kashmir. All Mainstream Newspapers are being printed. 37 English dailies, 53 Urdu dailies and 2 Kashmiri dailies are published in Kashmir. All major national and regional newspapers published in Jammu. Satellite channels and Cable TV networks are operational.



- No restriction during Friday prayers. EidMilad-un-Nabi was celebrated in Jammu and Kashmir with usual splendor. Thousands offered prayers at Dargah Hazratbal.
- **Economic activity is being given a boost.** Apples contribute approximately USD 1.2 billion to Jammu & Kashmir economy. 700,000 farmers in J&K grow 2.2 million metric tons of apples. This being the harvest season, harvest of apple & other fruits and their transportation to market is facilitated. With this facilitation, over 1.4 million metric tons of apples have been already exported out of Jammu & Kashmir. Kashmiri saffron got Geographic Indication (GI) registration on 25.09.2019.
- Government launched a **'Special Market Intervention Price Scheme'** for price support to **apple farmers** under which, **government has procured 8960 metric tons of apple directly from apple farmers valued at USD 5.1 Million. Of this, payment of more than US 4 Million have already been directly made to the farmers.** On 08 October 2019, Government increased the support price for apples to be given to farmers. Special effort is also on for boosting production of Almond and Walnut production in Jammu & Kashmir. Action Plan for promoting saffron cultivation, storage and processing at a cost of USD 12 million was approved on 28 September 2018 under National Saffron Mission.
- To provide employment to the youth, **government has identified 50,000 job vacancies, which will be filled in the next few months**, thus generating employment for the youth in Jammu & Kashmir. District police in Baramulla, Awantipora and Srinagar has started recruitment of youth for Special Police Officers posts in the respective districts. Lt Governor of J&K informed that the government is working on giving **jobs to 30,000-40,000 youth** in police and other forces / in various government departments. Border Security Force and Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) have begun a recruitment drive for youth in Jammu & Kashmir and over 50,000 have applied for these posts. Recruitment drive for 5,200 posts of Special Police Officers (SPO) evoked huge response with over 77,000 youths applying for it. Over 400 youths belonging to different areas of J&K have been inducted into the Army's Jammu and Kashmir Light Infantry regiment, the passing out parade for which was held in Rangreh (outskirts of Srinagar) on 07 December 2019.
- **Elections to second tier of Local Government i.e. 310 Block Development Councils (BDC)** were held on 24 October 2019. Over 98% polling was recorded in the indirect elections. A total of 307 of BDCs have

been elected. Last year, elections to the first tier of local bodies i.e. panchayats were held in which 3847 sarpanches and 27223 panches were elected with a voter turnout of 73%.

- Under the flagship **“Back to Village-2” (B2V2) programme**, to be organized between 25-30 November 2019. Governor of J&K said that 5,000 officers would reach out to people in each panchayat to discuss the various development programmes as well as the issues faced by the people at the grassroots.
- There has been **no incident of major violence**. Not even a single live bullet has been fired. There has been **no loss of life** in police action. However, terrorists and their proxies are trying to create an atmosphere of fear and intimidation in Kashmir, to disrupt normalcy in Jammu & Kashmir. These include hundreds of posters threatening the shopkeepers, fruit growers, government officials, and transporters at several locations across Kashmir valley. Dozens of shops and vending carts have been set ablaze to stop business activities.
- **16 civilians have been killed and over 50 civilians have been injured in various terror attacks, with the most recent one involving a grenade attack at a public crowd at a government programme in Anantnag.**
- **With the objective of preventing sale of apple, terrorists have so far killed 3 truck drivers in Shopian, one labourer in Pulwama, and five labourers in Kulgam.**
- Terrorists are also preventing the normal functioning of schools as they have started attacking schools since the announcement of the conduct of examination for students. There have been 8 attacks by terrorists on educational institutions, latest being the grenade attack opposite entrance of Kashmir University in Srinagar on 26 November 2019. This also includes setting a school in Kulgam village on fire, hurling a petrol bomb towards Model Public High School in Baramulla, and firing at Drubgam Higher Secondary School while class 10 exams were underway.